1: Whiting E-5 (1936-1937) 1941
OJ13 Kwoma OJ13

121 861 or beaten by his teachers. Thus a strong habit of heeding whatever warning a teacher may issue is built up in every Kwoma individual. As a result, Kwoma teachers may warn 121 869 their pupils concerning dangers which do not exist and expect that their pupils will heed. This is in fact the case in the inculcation of supernatural beliefs. By means of warnings Kwoma teachers instill in their pupils an unrealistic fear of *marsalai*, ghosts, sorcery, and blood.[1]

[796] *Marsalai* are supposed to be huge monsters in the form of snakes or crocodiles which cause rain and wind storms, earthquakes, and other cosmic phenomena. They are supposed to 869 be present at the yam-cult ceremonies and to be responsible 796 for a plentiful yield of this crop. A child is first warned about [862] these monsters early in life. When a Kwoma mother weans her child she warns him not to suckle, lest he be injured by the *marsalai* which has now taken possession of her breast. She sometimes emphasizes this story by putting a bloodsucker [823] on her breast. During childhood a person is warned not to [821] go near or touch certain rocks and waterholes, lest the *marsalai* who dwell therein cause a storm or shoot a sago needle [796] into his foot in anger at being disturbed. He is also warned at this period not to go near the house tamberan during a cult ceremony lest the *marsalai* who are present kill him. He is told that the sounds[2] which he hears are the voices of these [798] monsters. When he is initiated at the beginning of adolescence, he is warned not to look up too suddenly at the cult figures which represent the *marsalai* lest the shock kill him.

869 795 Ghosts are believed to be the spirits of dead Kwoma who live on the outskirts of the tribal territory. Either as invisible shadows or in the form of a bird or an animal, they sometimes visit the hamlet of the living, particularly at night or when a death has occurred. It is believed that they sometimes attack a person, that they can cause accidents by frightening him, that they are eager to take souls to the land of the dead, and that they cause nightmares and fits of possession. Most warn-

[1] Kwoma have other supernatural beliefs, but these four provide the most important sources of unrealistic fear.

[2] Gongs, flutes, and bull-roarers.

349 coconut fronds, standing up. They claimed that this was an innovation
[177] brought in by the "finish timers"; perhaps it has replaced some other element in their culture. It is interesting to note that Bateson took a picture, printed in Oceania, which is very reminiscent of this.

123 We first were given a coconut, the milk of which we drank. The
262 natives were eating sago, pig, and roast sago grubs. After a while it was suggested that if we wanted to eat "food belong kanaka" we could. They did it in a way so that we could have refused had we wished, but seemed as though they would be flattered if we accepted. I remember reading several accounts of similar situations described by ethnographers and travellers where they had eaten some outlandish food, as they said, to avoid insulting the natives. I feel that if we had refused, they might have been mildly hurt, but not insulted. The sago was handed to us wrapped in a leaf--a gelatinous globule. It was absolutely tasteless, and I did not find it very pleasant. I don't think Tip did either. Neither of us finished our helping, but gave them to some of the natives who were glad to finish them for us. The roast grubs were really quite good, but despite myself, I was a bit disgusted--not so much, however, that I didn't get down a goodly number of them.

796 After dinner the dancing recommenced as before, and shortly thereafter we
125 were told to leave. We were each given a coconut and a yam as a parting gift, told that the singsing would continue all night, but that it was taboo to us.
[417] The next day someone was going to build a screen across the front of the
[346] house tamberan so that the women and uninitiated children who would come into the
[178] front court could not see the sacred altar.

123 Toward evening about a dozen of the natives had gathered around our
526 house and we went out to talk to them. Soon we were idly tossing stones. They threw by stiffly rocking their whole bodies back and holding their wrists stiff. They did bend their elbows, however. None of them could throw as far as either Tip or I, but their accuracy at short distances was amazing. Approximately every other shot would hit a small sapling about twenty yards away.

114 While Tip and I were playing cribbage just before supper, it began to
132 rain-- a downpour with quite a strong wind. The house began to leak in various unsuspected places, particularly right over my head, where it came through with a gush and startled me. The storm lasted about half an hour when the wind shifted and the rain stopped. The wind is very peculiar here. It will blow up very strongly for about a minute and then will drop to almost an absolute calm for another minute.

796 Yesterday was supposed to be the second day of the singsing, but in the
764 morning Mar came to tell us that it had been postponed because someone had died the night before. He was a young man who had been sick for quite a while. We did not think it wise to be too inquisitive, but found out that he had not been buried, but "hung up". The singsing began again today however.

796 During breakfast we heard the gongs and chanting start, so we ate
[114] quickly and started down the hill. By this time the drumming and singing had stopped.

796 When we reached the house tamberan, several of the natives greeted us
346 and shook our hands. Everyone talked with a hushed voice, explaining to us that
778 the singsing had not yet begun. We were led up to the altar which had been
[123] rearranged since the previous day of the singsing. It was in the shape of an inverted truncated cone about four feet high constructed from mat bags stretched

796 around a framework. At the front and back ends, tilting toward the center,
346 were two huge masks, about four feet long and a foot wide. They were
708 beautifully carved and painted in black, white , red, and green. At the
[532] top of each mask was fastened what looked like feather work, a semblance of
[237] hair. Capping this were plumes similar to those worn by the dancers themselves.
The mask near the front was called asambwaŋ, and belonged to Waskuk (an old man of Waskuk actually owned it); the one at the rear was called abimakwa and belonged to Bangus (actually to the cicatrizer). The space between the masks on the top of the altar was covered with shell ornaments. A pumpkin seed shaped ornament of small cowrie shells fastened in rows on a woven or closely netted fabric was called sawimaŋ. Another was similarly constructed, but shaped as a crocodile, with two larger shells for eyes, and called no maski (no means crocodile). Plumes, cockatoo, pigeon, etc, were set in various
[535] places in addition to bit of yellow grass hung in bunches. Some of the dancers also wore this same yellow grass stuck into their arm and leg bands.

796 The front of the house tamberan had been hidden from view by a 6½' screen.
346 While it prevented the women and children from seeing the sacred precincts,
417 the men could and did stand up on the framework of the screen to look out onto the other side. The women and children were not to come until the next day, but some of the men, at least one anyway, were on the women's side. We did not dare look over the screen for fear of breaking some taboo.

796 After a few minutes, we were escorted to some seats (planks that had been
533 hewn from 2' x 6' x 8" logs, and roughly carved), and told that the singing
[123] would begin soon. Some of the natives began to walk slowly and silently around
[352] the altar while the "lulual" of Bangus, (one of the Kwoma hamlets) Sowinambi, began a verse in a high voice which ended in a prolonged o on the same note and fell off to a wi with shorter duration, on a lower note. This verse was answered from the other side of the screen in exactly the same manner, but with different words to the verse.

211 at one side of which there was a stone about thirty inches high and five inches square set on end. There were two chips out of the top of this.
[648] Owiyap, who was with Tip at the time, explained that it was put up by the Germans after they had killed a Waskuk man and woman in retaliation for the spear one of their entourage had received in the leg from the natives. The chips from the stone represented the two deaths and was put there as a reminder of them. The story also goes that the police boys of the Germans cooked and ate the Waskuk woman.

778 The next day on a trip in the other direction he discovered another stone of interest. This was another small monolith about three feet high and eight inches square. It was situated in the clearing of the Sombundura house tamberan in front of the house and on a line with its main axis.
[821] When Tip touched it, Owiyap and others were much aghast. They said that this would cause a big wind to come up. Actually the wind continued to blow that night, but it was calm the following night.

443 Yesterday morning, Nov. 12, Tip went down to the"bUng" (pidgin for
439 market place) to watch the Waskuk women trade their sago with the Yambon
443 women for fish, betel nut, and beads - mainly fish. Word had been sent
203 announcing the trading by a mnemonic device consisting of a knotted string -
211 one knot for each day which was to intervene between the reception of the string and the actual trading. The trading was done very expeditiously,... I think I will copy Tip's notes.

[439] "A regular trade is kept up between Yambon and the Waskuk. The particular day on which it will be held is set by the Waskuks. This is communicated to the Yambons by means of something in the nature of a
443 knotted string.....The Waskuk trading place is situated at the end of the

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[534] sized trunk of a tree hollowed out and open at both ends. It is hung bottom up in the water and struck with a long heavy post wielded by two men.

The outline of another similar pit which has been filled in was seen beside the one now in use. This I was told had leaked badly. The new one has to be filled from any of several bamboo containers stuck under the 'banif' quite often.

[346] In the house tamberan there is the same alter set up in the center with
[178] a small amount of shell money, two stubby bamboo flutes, and a wooden
[538] trumpet on top. Above it rises a 3' carved wooden figure of a woman. This
[532] is the woman for whom the ceremony is held. There is also a secondary
[614] figure under the water drum less important than the one on the alter. These two are sugiliwas of the tug sib (Bangus).

Between 30 and 40 men are present when we arrive in the early afternoon.
[535] They are singing and half-walking, half-dancing around the water gong
[533] counter-clockwise. The gong keeps up a steady boom-boom-boom with few
[534] interruptions even when new beaters relieve those who are tired. The men drop out from time to time to smoke or to chat so that no more than half are dancing while we are there. Later on in the evening we are told this is not so; everyone is dancing almost continuously. But the sun was hot and there were still many men to come, so it was being taken easily. Men from all of the Honwem sibs are present and also a few men of Koriasi and
[703] Koriasi Tangwishemp. Only four of these were "savi talks". These four,
[178] however, were the regalia of a homicide which seems to point to the fact
[554] that killing for prestige still goes on in spite of government prohibitions.
[726] These men may have won their letter in the prearranged fight with a small hamlet of Koriasi about three years ago. Six of the latter, four of them women and children, were killed then. (We haven't got this story straight yet for we have only recently stumbled on it).

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23 broadside shot at not more than thirty feet. I drew a quick aim and fired - the pig, just ahead of Maab, instead of dropping in its tracks, went bounding off into the bush. This was very bad, for not only would the sale fall through but the pig might go off and die in the bush. So a chase started then that was to last until after noon. John had come up with his .22 with a crowd of men as soon as they had heard us fire. We all began to scour the bush nearby and to get scoured ourselves by creepers, branches and nettles. The men and boys suddenly all had spears and the hunt was on. We who had guns were called all over the district by people who had just seen the pig. John saw it once and had two shots at it, but the .22 didn't kill it.

When we gathered together again at Marok's house, speculation was rife as to what had happened. Maab swore that we both had hit it and that he had seen the holes the bullets had made. Inasmuch as I found the one bullet I was able to fire in the ground under the spot where the pig had stood, I am almost sure that I didn't hit it. Maab's story was believed by [778] most everyone. Then it appeared that the pig was sugiliwas, and some supernatural agency had come down into it and given it power to run away. Marok seemed very proud of what the pig had done and told us that the pig was his people's (Wanyi) totem . Some said that it was maara, his sugiliwas, that was in the beast and wouldn't let it go until night because it didn't want Marok to sell his pig. We were quite willing to accept any such explanation for the sake of our reputations as marksmen.

The wear and tear on our clothes and bodies during the morning was terrific. John turned his nose into a yam stick in a headlong fall down a muddy slope, and I got a stitch in my side which made my eyes pop from answering false alarms at the house on top of the mountain. A hairless goat might feel at home in these surroundings, but as yet we can't even bleat.

356 with a digging stick. Wer's oldest daughter (age 9) appeared from the
[357] back (Kar's house). She had been left to look after the house.

123 February 8, 1937. Kum came up this morning and talked until noon. Wof came up this afternoon and moaned about everyone else getting things (the nothing.
diwai etc. that I have been buying) while he got/ I said that if he had something to sell, I would buy it. He brought up a spear. I had one just like it and so I said no. He was quite hurt, so I give him a plane iron for
578 nothing. According to May, the argument between Wof and Chimuwe is finished.
754 She did not give the sungeyawa (sorcery materials) to another man but kept it in her bilum (net bag).

302 This afternoon I went to Mar's and sat down. Mar's wife (Yawapa) was shaving Awambaka's (Mar's sister) hair. (Hair is shaved because it will grow in strong afterward). May was there. He did not look at Mar's
578 sisters. Kum was there but left soon after and started to carry a bit of firewood away with him. Awambaka immediately yelled at him, picked up a broom, and threatened him with it. He dropped the firewood.

123 Mar brought out the perfume that I gave him yesterday, and I told him
593 to let his sister smell it, but he wouldn't do it.

124 Then I went to Wof's house. A group had gathered there on their way to my house--three Hayamakwo men and Mes' mother who were coming back to
[532] look at my house. I went home. The men came into my sleep room, looked at the
[778] diwais (carved figures), and we discussed who had made them and usually one of them could tell. In the morning Kumb had said that some of the big men were cross because I had left the figures around, so we put the most sacred ones in a box. I showed them to the three men, and they shook their heads and clucked their tongues and spoke in a whisper. Others had seen the same things lying about and had not reacted half as much.